THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH

DAGNEY.

BV
130
D3
1882
GTU
Storage

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

THE GIFT OF

HENRY HOLDEN WOOD

From W. C. Mosher
of
Pasadena.
Oct. 30, 1885

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/christiansabbath0000revr

THE

CHRISTIAN SABBATH:

ITS NATURE, DESIGN

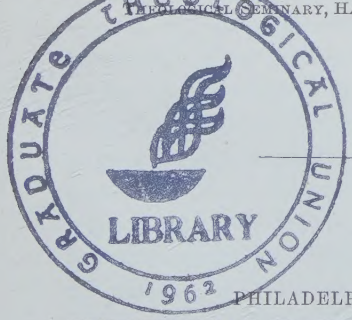
AND

PROPER OBSERVANCE.

BY THE

REV. R. L. DABNEY, D.D., LL.D.,

PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC AND PASTORAL THEOLOGY IN THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, HAMPDEN-SIDNEY, VA.



Property of
CBSK
Please return to
Graduate Theological
Union Library

PHILADELPHIA:
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION,
NO. 1334 CHESTNUT STREET.

BV
130
D3
1882

COPYRIGHT, 1882, BY

THE TRUSTEES OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

WESTCOTT & THOMSON,
Stereotypers and Electrotypers, Philada.

2119
D112

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH:

Its Nature, Design and Proper Observance.

IT must be confessed that the Christian world now presents an anomalous condition touching the Sabbath. Strict Protestants usually profess in theory the views once peculiar to Presbyterians, and admit that the proper observance of the Sabbath is a bulwark of practical Christianity. But their practice does not always correspond with their theory. In actual life there is, among good people, a great uncertainty, with a corresponding confusion of usages, from great laxity up to the sacred strictness of our pious forefathers. It is greatly to be feared that those in the Church who tolerate this laxity are increasing in numbers and influence. The civil law, which guarantees the Sabbath rest to all as a secular benefit and right, is enforced with more and more difficulty, especially in populous places; and this law is disregarded with increasing boldness by powerful corporations and by those who offer amusements and sensual enjoyments to the public. Hence the wisest friends of truth and good have taken the alarm. The aim of this treatise is

239

to give some humble help in this good cause by proving the divine and perpetual authority of God's holy day.

It will appear singular to the thoughtful observer that the consciences of devout and sincere persons leave them room for such license in their Sabbath observance, while in all other things they show themselves honest Christians, sincerely governed by their convictions of truth and duty. The explanation is, that men's convictions touching the claims of the Sabbath are not clear. And this confusion of opinions is to be traced to a fact of which many, perhaps, who experience its injurious effects are not aware—that the Protestant communions founded after the great Reformation were widely and avowedly divided in their opinions on this duty. In our mixed population in America the descendants of these different communions live dispersed among each other, and oftentimes are found in the same churches. They have lost sight of the opposing doctrines, the one asserting that the Lord's day is still God's Sabbath, and the other denying it —doctrines once honestly held by their respective forefathers. But the usages, strict or loose, which consistently flowed from these convictions, scriptural or erroneous, cleave to the descendants. These lax customs, by example, influence multitudes of other Christians. Thus, many persons weakly lapse into breaches of the Sabbath law for which they have not even the partial excuse of an erroneous opinion

honestly adopted; and they violate their own professed doctrine, feebly and unintelligently held, with a looseness of conscience greater than that of the European Protestants whom we condemn for avowedly neglecting the Sabbath. Hence, a brief historical statement will be instructive, and will prepare the way for our appeal to God's word. It will not be necessary for the purpose in view to encumber this statement with names and authorities, or to detail the names of the churches and men who held the one or the other side.

It may be said, in general terms, that since the days of primitive Christianity there has existed a difference of opinion in the Christian world as to the authority upon which the Lord's day should be observed. The Reformation did not extinguish, but rather defined and fixed, that difference. The wrong side, as we conceive it, was held not only by papists, but by some of the great Reformers, and error was by them planted in some of the Protestant churches. According to that opinion, the sanctification of one day from every seven was a ceremonial, typical and Levitical custom, and it was therefore abrogated when a better dispensation came, along with other shadows of spiritual blessings. These persons admit that the Lord's day deserves observance as a Christian festival, because it is a weekly memorial of the blessed resurrection, and because the example of the Church and the enactments of her synods support it, but not because it is now a commandment

of God. Weekly rest from worldly labors is a social and civil blessing, they say, very properly secured by the laws of the commonwealth, and so long as these laws are in force every good citizen must of course comply with them. Public and associated worship of God is also a scriptural duty of Christians. But in order that they may join in these acts of worship they must agree upon some stated day and place; and what day so suitable as this first day of the week, which is already made a day of leisure from secular cares by the law of the commonwealth, crowned with pious associations and commemorative of the grand event of the gospel history, Christ's rising from the dead? But this, they say, is all. To sanctify the whole day as a religious rest under the supposed authority of a divine command is *judaizing;* it is burdening our necks with the bondage of a merely positive and typical ceremony which belonged to a darker dispensation.

The second opinion is that embodied in the Westminster Confession; and to the honor of the Presbyterian branches of the Protestant body it may be asserted that these have been, since the Reformation, the most intelligent and decided supporters of it. These Christians believe that the sanctification of some stated portion of time, such as God may select, to his worship, is a duty of perpetual obligation for all ages, dispensations and nations, as truly as the other unchangeable duties of morals and religion;

and that the Sabbath command has been to this extent always a "moral" one, as distinguished from a "positive,* ceremonial" one. They believe that God selected one-seventh as his proper portion of time at the creation, at Sinai, and again at the incoming of the last dispensation. But when the ceremonial law was for a particular, temporary purpose added to the original, patriarchal dispensation, the seventh day became also for a time a Levitical holy day and a type. This temporary feature has of course passed away with the Jewish institutions. Upon the resurrection of Christ the original Sabbath obligation was by God fixed upon the first day of the week, because this day completed a second work even more glorious and beneficent than the world's creation by the rising of Christ from the tomb. Hence, from that date to the end of the world the Lord's day is, by divine and apostolic authority, substantially what the Sabbath day was originally to God's people. It is literally the

* Most of God's commands are simply expressions of the essential and unchangeable rightness of the things commanded, as when we are enjoined to speak truth and love God. These precepts divines call "moral" or "permanent moral." The things are commanded because they are right in themselves. But some things God commands or forbids for wise reasons which, without his precept, would not be of themselves right or wrong. Such was the prohibition to the Jews to eat swines' flesh. These precepts the divines term "positive." The things are right or wrong only so long as, and only because, God enjoins and prohibits them. Many ceremonial commands, rules about ceremonies, are of this kind.

"Christian Sabbath," and is to be observed with the same sanctity as it was by the patriarchs.

The great synod which most truly in modern ages propounded this doctrine of the Lord's day was the Westminster Assembly. Its Confession of Faith is now the standard of the Scotch, the Irish and the American Presbyterian churches, as well as of some independent bodies. It puts the truth so luminously that its words, though familiar to many readers, are repeated here as the best statement of what is to be proved in the subsequent discussion: *

"As it is of the law of nature that in general a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God, so in his word, by a positive, moral and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto him, which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ was the last day of the week, and from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord's day, and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath.

"The Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord when men, after a due preparing of their hearts and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations, but also are taken up

* *Westminster Confession of Faith*, xxi., §§ 7, 8.

the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship and in the duties of necessity and mercy."

The attempt will now be made to give a brief and plain statement of the grounds upon which this position rests. And,

First. The Sabbath law is contained in the Decalogue. None will dispute this proposition: That if this is "a positive, moral and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages," the change from the Jewish to the Christian dispensation has not removed its divine authority over us. Not being "positive and ceremonial" like the Jewish rules of meats, new moons and sacrifices, it has not passed away along with the other Jewish shadows. Let us, then, test the truth of the former position—that the Sabbath command in the Decalogue was "moral and perpetual."

The argument will pursue this plain and fair course: If this command was not for the first time introduced by the Levitical economy, but was in full force before, and if it was binding not on Jews only, but on all men, then the abrogation of that dispensation cannot have abrogated it, because it did not institute it.

We are but using logic parallel to that which the apostle Paul employs in a similar case. He is proving that the gospel promise made to the Hebrews in Abraham could not have been retracted when the law was published on Sinai. His argument is (Gal. 3 : 17): "The covenant that was confirmed

before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul." So reason we: If the Sabbath was instituted long before, it did not come with Judaism, and does not go with it. It is instructive to note that those Christian Fathers who gave countenance to the idea that the divine injunction of the Sabbath was abrogated also leaned to the opinion that the Sabbath was of Mosaic origin. This indirectly confirms the soundness of our inference, while it betrays their slender acquaintance with the Old-Testament Scriptures. The anti-Sabbath opinion in the Christian Church had its origin in error and ignorance among the early, uninspired teachers.

It may be argued that the Sabbath is of moral and perpetual authority from these facts: There is a reason in the nature of things, making such an institution essential to man's religious welfare and duty; and this necessity is substantially the same in all ages and nations. That it is man's duty to worship God none with whom we now deal will dispute. Nor will it be denied that this worship should be in part social, because man is a being of social affections and subject to social obligations, and because one of the great ends of worship is the display of the divine glory before our fellow-creatures. Social worship cannot be conducted without the appointment of a stated day; and who can authoritatively appoint that day except the God who is the object of the worship? For the cultivation of our individual

devotion and piety a periodical season is absolutely necessary to creatures of habit and finite capacities like us. What is not regularly done will soon be omitted, for we are dependent on habit; and of this periodical recurrence is the very foundation. We are by nature carnal and sensuous beings; we are prone to walk by sense instead of faith. The things which are seen, but temporal, are ever obscuring the things which are unseen, but eternal. If such creatures were left to themselves to appropriate to spiritual interests only such irregular seasons as they should select of their own motion, it is very plain that the final issue would be the total neglect and omission of the interests of eternity. This conclusion is fully confirmed by experience, for among nominal Christians, where the Sabbath is entirely neglected, the result is always a practical godlessness among the people; and it is believed that even among Mohammedans and pagans the employment of some stated holy days has been found essential to the existence of those religions. The tribes which have no holy day, the obligation of whose observance is believed by them to be from their gods, are those which, like the Bushmen of South Africa and the Australian blacks, are almost as devoid of religious ideas and as degraded as the apes of their native wilds. It seems absolutely necessary that man's unstable religious sentiments be fixed for him by having them attached by divine authority to a sacred day and an appointed worship.

But it is a well-known maxim in morals that when a certain work is obligatory, the necessary means for its performance are equally obligatory. The question whether the Sabbath command is moral or positive seems, therefore, to admit of a very simple solution. Whether one day in six or one in eight might not have seemed to the divine wisdom admissible for its purpose, or which day of the seven, the first or the last, should be consecrated to it, or what ought to be the particular forms of its worship,—these things, we admit, are of merely positive institution, and may be changed by the divine Legislator. But that man shall have his stated period of worship enjoined upon him is as truly a dictate of the natural conscience and as immediate a result of our relation to God as that man shall worship his God at all. And no reason can be shown why this obligation was more or less stringent upon Israelites of the Mosaic period than on men before or since them.

Having found the observance of some stated and recurring season essential to that worship of God which is naturally and perpetually incumbent on us, we ask, By whom shall the season be selected and enforced?—by man or by God? If the great duty of worship is essentially and morally binding, this necessary provision for compliance is also essentially and morally binding. Whose is the reasonable and natural authority for providing and enforcing it?—the creature's or the Lord's? To ask this

question is to answer it. Obviously, this provision ought to be fixed by the Lord, to whom the worship is due. It is his right to settle it. He alone has the authority to enforce it. The purposes of social and concerted worship require *uniformity* in the season. Now, the Jew says each seventh day, the Christian says that each first day, is the proper season. If this is left to mere human authority, the Christian has no more right to dictate his preference to the Jew than the Jew to force his on the Christian. No uniformity can be had. Clearly, the selecting and enforcing of the proper day does not belong to Jew or Christian, but to the divine Lord.

We argue, further, that the enactment of the Sabbath law does not date from Moses, but was coeval with the human race. It is one of the first two institutions of Paradise. The sanctification of the day took place from the very end of the week of creation. For whose observance was the day, then, consecrated or set apart, if not for man's? Not for God's observance, because the glorious paradox is for ever true of him that his blessed quiet is as everlasting as his ceaseless activity. Not for the angels', surely. But for Adam's. Doubtless, Eden witnessed the sacred rest of him and his consort from

> "the toil
> Of their sweet gardening labor, which sufficed
> To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease
> More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
> More grateful."

And from that time downward we have indications, brief indeed, but as numerous as we can expect in the compendious record of Genesis, and sufficient to show us that the Sabbath continued to be an institution of the patriarchal religion. A slight probable evidence of this may be seen in the fact that *seven* has ever been a sacred and symbolical number among ancient patriarchs, Israelites and pagans. In Genesis we read of the "seven clean beasts," the "seven well-favored" and "seven lean kine," the "seven ears of corn rank and good." Now, there is no natural sign in the heavens or earth to suggest the number, for no heavenly body or natural element revolves in precisely seven months, days or hours, nor do any of man's external members number seven. Whence, then, the peculiar idea attached so early to the number, if not from the institution of the week for our first parents?

But to proceed to more solid facts. The "end of days" or "return of days" (Gen. 4 : 3), rendered in our version "process of time," at which Cain and Abel offered their sacrifices, was most likely the end of the week, the Sabbath day. In Gen. 7 : 10 we find God himself observing the weekly interval in the preparations for the Flood. We find another clear hint of the observance of this weekly division of time by Noah and his family in their floating prison. In Gen. 8 : 10–12 the patriarch twice waited a period of seven days to send out his dove. From Gen. 29 : 27 we learn that it was customary

among the patriarchs of Mesopotamia in the days of Laban to continue a wedding-festival a week; and the very term of service rendered by Jacob for his two wives shows the use made of the number seven as the customary duration of a contract for domestic service. Gen. 50 : 10 shows us that at the time of Jacob's death a week was also the length of the most honorable funeral exercises. In Ex. 12 : 3–20 we find the first institution of the passover, when as yet there were no Levitical institutions. This feast was also appointed to last a week. In Ex. 16 : 22–30, where we read the first account of the manna, we find the Sabbath observance already in full force; and no candid mind will say that this is the history of its first enactment. It is spoken of as a rest with which the people ought to have been familiar. But the people had not yet come to Sinai, and none of its institutions had been given. Here, then, we have the Sabbath rest enforced on Israel before the ceremonial law was set up, and two weekly variations wrought in the standing miracles of the manna in order to facilitate its observance.

This fact is so fatal to the doctrine that the Sabbath was only a Levitical ordinance that opponents have attempted to deny the force of it. They say that Moses now, for the first time, anticipating the law of Sinai by a few days, gave the Hebrews the Sabbath on the occasion of the manna's beginning to fall. They would have us believe that the people

had never heard of the Sabbath before. This construction they force on the twenty-third verse: "And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said: To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord," etc. But we answer: Moses does not say or imply that this was the *first time* the Lord said the seventh day was holy. On the contrary, the drift of the whole narrative shows that the Lord was now, by Moses, referring the people to their former knowledge of the sanctity of the Sabbath as an explanation of their finding no manna on that day. No fair reader can compare the words with Gen. 2 : 3 without seeing this. But especially does the twenty-second verse of chap. 16 prove our view and refute the other. The people had, on the sixth day, already begun to make preparations for the rest of the seventh by gathering two portions of manna, before Moses or the elders had said one word to them about it! Their doing so was what prompted the elders to make the inquiry of Moses. Thus it appears beyond question that the Hebrews did know of God's command to hallow the Sabbath, and were in the general (not universal) habit of honoring it, before ever the manna had fallen or Moses had said a word about the duty.

But let us proceed to Sinai. When the Sabbath command is there repeated it is stated in terms which clearly imply that it was known before and that its obligation was only reaffirmed. The fourth command begins: "*Remember* the Sabbath day to

keep it holy." It is not accurate to call on people to remember what they had never heard before. None of the other commands begin thus. But others, if not all, of them were old commands, known to God's people before. Yet the fourth alone begins with the call to remember. This makes the language more expressive, and it indicates plainly this thought: that in the fourth commandment God considered himself as only requiring the same duty taught to Adam.

It is argued, further, that the very fact that this precept has its place in the awful "Ten Words" is itself evidence enough that it is no mere positive and ceremonial command, but one moral and perpetual.

Confessedly, there is nothing else ceremonial here. An eminent distinction was given to these ten commands by the mode in which God delivered them. They were given first of all the laws enacted at Horeb. They were spoken in the hearing of all the people by God's own voice of thunder, which formed its tremendous sounds into syllables so loud that the whole multitude around the base of the mount heard them break articulate from the cloud upon its peak. "These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a great voice; *and he added no more*" (Deut. 5 : 22). No other words shared the same distinction.

Then they were engraved, by God's own agency, on two stone tables, whose durability was to represent the perpetual obligation of all that was written upon them. How can it be believed that one ceremonial precept was thrust in here where all else is of obligation as old and as universal and as lasting as the race? There is no ceremonial rule on the two tables. This conclusion is confirmed by another fact: the two tables were made "tables of the testimony," and for holding them the sacred ark was made, called the "ark of the testimony," covered with the mercy-seat and crowned by the Shekinah, the bright symbol of God's presence. This fact showed that this law written on the stones was the permanent bond of God's covenant with his Church—the very law which the great, divine High Priest came to honor, and whose breaches are covered only by the blood of Calvary.

We find, again, that the ground assigned in the commandment is the same as in Genesis, and is in no sense Jewish or local or temporary. God's work of creation in six days and his rest upon the seventh have just as much relation to one tribe of Adam's descendants as to another. To appreciate the force of this we must notice, on the other hand, that when ceremonial commands are given which are peculiar to the Jews, such as the passover, a Jewish event is assigned as its ground, as the deliverance from Egypt.

The early traditions of the pagans are, of course,

of no divine authority to us, yet they give an interesting support to the lesson taught us in Genesis and Exodus, showing that even these idolaters once knew that the Sabbath was a primeval institution ordained for all nations. No one will imagine that Homer and Hesiod, for instance, borrowed from the Old Testament sabbatical allusions which would have been unintelligible to their pagan readers. These poets evidently refer to the popular traditions which these Greek descendants of Japheth carried to the "isles of Chittim." A few of the early allusions to a Sabbath will be borrowed from the writings of Clement of Alexandria, a learned Christian of the second century, inasmuch as he has made them ready to our hands. He remarks: "That the seventh day is sacred, not the Hebrews only, but the Gentiles also, acknowledge, according to which the whole universe of living and vegetable things revolve. Hesiod, for instance (*Dierum* 6), says of it, 'The first and the fourth and the seventh also is a sacred day.' And again he exclaims: 'The seventh day once more, the splendid dawn of the sun.' And Homer sings, 'The seventh then arrived, the sacred day.' Again, 'The seventh was sacred.' Once more, 'The seventh dawn was at hand, and with this all this series is completed.'" Clement also quotes the poet Callimachus as saying, "It was now the sabbath day, and with this all was accomplished." "The seventh day is among the fortunate; yea, the seventh is the parent day.'

"The seventh day is the first, and the seventh is the complement." "This day the elegies of Solon also proclaim as more sacred, in a wonderful mode." Thus far Clement, *Præparatio Evang.*

The ancient Jewish historian Josephus, in his last book against Apion, affirms "that there could be found no city, either of the Grecians or barbarians, who owned not a seventh day's rest from labor." The learned Jew Philo called it the "festival of all nations."

The most emphatic uninspired testimony is also the most valuable because of its antiquity. The late Mr. George Smith, famous for his Assyrian researches, says: "In the year 1869, I discovered, among other things, a curious religious calendar of the Assyrians, in which every month is divided into four weeks, and the seventh days, or 'sabbaths,' are marked out as days on which no work should be undertaken" (*Assyrian Discoveries*, p. 12). H. Fox Talbot, in his translation of these Creation-tablets, renders two lines thus:

> "On the seventh day he appointed a holy day,
> And to cease from all business he commanded."

He also says: "This fifth tablet is very important, because it affirms clearly, in my opinion, that the origin of the Sabbath was coeval with the creation." So the Rev. A. H. Sayce (*Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, vol. v., Pt. II., pp. 427, 428). Mr. Sayce has translated the rules for each day of the month.

Those for the seventh day (which is called "sabbath" and "day of completion") forbid the prince on that day to eat cooked fruits and birds, to change his garments, to legislate or appoint officeholders, to take medicine; and requires him to make his sacrifice to God on that day.

There is another convincing proof that the Sabbath never was a merely Levitical institution which is found in the fact that in the very law of the Decalogue God commands its observance equally by Jews and Gentiles: "In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, *nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.*" This stranger was the foreigner residing in the land of Israel. To see the convincing force of this fact the reader must contrast the jealous care with which the "stranger," the pagan foreigner sojourning in Jewry, was excluded from all share in the Levitical worship. No foreigner could partake of the passover; it was sacrilege. It was at the peril of his life that he presumed to enter the inner courtyard of the temple, where the bloody sacrifice was offered. Now, when this foreigner is required to keep the Sabbath along with the families of Israel, does not this prove that rest to be no ceremonial, no type like the passover and the altar, but a universal moral institution designed for all nations and times?

Once more: That the Sabbath of the Decalogue

was not a ceremonial command is proved by the fact that its violation was made a capital offence. (See Ex. 31 : 14.) No ceremonial command was thus enforced. Even circumcision, fundamental as it was to the whole economy, was not thus fenced up. Its neglect of course excluded a man from the Church, but it incurred no capital penalty.

Care has been taken to establish this assertion on an immovable basis, because the inference from it is so direct. If the Sabbath command was in full force before Moses, the passing away of Moses' law did not revoke it. If it always was binding, on grounds as general as the human race, over all tribes of mankind, the dissolution of God's special covenant with the family of Jacob did not repeal it. If the nature of the Sabbath is moral and practical, then the substitution of the substance for the types did not supplant it. The ceremonial laws were temporary, because the need for them was temporary. They were removed because the Church no longer required them. But the practical need for a Sabbath is the same in all ages. When we are made to see that the sanctification of this day is the bulwark of practical religion in the world; that it goes hand-in-hand everywhere with piety and the true knowledge of God; that where there is no Sabbath there is at last no Christianity,—it becomes incredible to us that God would make the institution temporary. The necessity for a Sabbath has not ceased; therefore the command has not been

revoked. It is a perpetual moral command, and moral commands are as incapable of repeal as the nature of God, on which they are founded, is of change. Hence we conclude that the command, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," stands just as binding upon us now as any other of the ten. The New-Testament writers and our Lord Jesus always speak of the other nine commands, and comment upon them, as permanent and unalterable: "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fail." The Sabbath command stands as one among the precepts of this permanent law, resting on grounds equally moral and universal.

But it is objected that the seventh-day Sabbath is declared to have been to the Hebrews a peculiar institution, and even a sign or type, having the ground of its injunctions in their own special history, and enjoined only as a badge of their own special theocratic covenant with God. Thus, in Deut. 5 : 15 the deliverance from Egypt is mentioned as the ground of the command: "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." It is sought to push this text to mean that to the rest of God's people, who did not share the exodus from Egypt, there is no ground for observing any Sabbath.

That this is utterly foreign from Moses' intent appears thus: The exodus from Egypt is the express preface to the first command (and so to the whole Decalogue), both here in Deut. 5 : 6 and in Ex. 20 : 2. This notable argument would prove, then, were it worth anything, that because we did not share the exodus from Egypt we are not bound by the great command against idolatry, nor indeed by any of the Decalogue! It is worthless.

Again: In Ex. 20 : 11 a worldwide and permanent ground for the Sabbath command is assigned: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth," etc, while nothing is said about the exodus. The explanation is clear. The Hebrews had all the reasons to keep the Sabbath which the whole human race has—God's sanctifying it at the creation of the race and commanding it to all the race. But they had this additional reason: that God had now blessed them above all other tribes. Hence they were bound by gratitude also to keep the Sabbath.

Again: It is objected that God made the Sabbath "a sign" between him and the Hebrews (Ex. 31 : 13, 17; Ezek. 20 : 12, 20). The attempt is made to infer hence that the Sabbath was a mere type to the Hebrews, and thus has passed away like all the other types, since the antitype, Christ, came. Again I reply: If its being "a sign" between God and Israel proves it a type, then the same argument proves that the great first law of

love itself was a type, and has been abrogated; for in Deut. 6 : 8, Israel is commanded to make this "a sign." Such is the absurdity of this argument. Moreover: the Decalogue itself is called again and again "the testimony," and the very chest in which the two tablets of stone, written with the commandments, were kept, is called the "ark of the testimony" (Ex. 25 : 16, 21; 31 : 18; 32 : 15; 34 : 29; Ps. 78 : 5). If the reader would see how near this word "testimony" is to the other word "sign," let him read Josh. 22 : 26–34. (The word is the same in the main.—*Ed.*) Let him compare also Ruth 4 : 7, where the shoe "was a testimony in Israel." The idea of the "sign" between God and Israel, and of the witness between them, is there nearly the same. Hence I argue again: If the Sabbath being "a sign" proves it a mere type, the Ten Commandments being a "testimony" or "witness" proves themselves a mere type.

To understand this "sign" we must remember that all the world except the Hebrews had gone off into idolatry, neglecting all God's laws and also the proper observance of his Sabbath. The covenant which Israel made with him was, to be separate from all the pagans and to obey his law, so neglected by them. Now, the public observance of the Sabbath gave the most obvious, general, visible sign to the world and the Church of this covenant, and of the difference between God's people and pagans. Hence it was eminently suitable as a

sign of that covenant. The human race is still divided between the world and the Church; and holy Sabbath observance ought to be precisely such a "sign" of the Church's relation to her God now. This simple view relieves the whole question. The general apostasy of the nations made this duty of visible Sabbath-keeping, which God enjoins on all men of all ages, a badge and mark of those who still fear him.

It should be noted also that the phrase "sabbaths," as used in the Pentateuch, means the other Jewish festivals as well as the seventh day. Thus in Lev. 25 : 2, 4 "sabbath" means the sabbatical year. In Lev. 19 : 3, 30 it probably includes all the annual festivals of religion. In Lev. 16 : 31 it means the great day of atonement, which, coming on the tenth day of the seventh month each year, might be any other day as well as the seventh. In Lev. 23 : 24 it means the day of the new moon, which might be on any day of the week.

Finally, the subsequent parts of the Old Testament teach us that Sabbath observance was, to the believing Hebrew, a spiritual and not a ceremonial duty. The ninety-second Psalm is entitled, by inspiration, "A psalm or song for the Sabbath day." Every sentiment there is evangelical, and the believer's chief joy in the day is in the foretaste it gives of the everlasting rest.

In Isa. 56 : 4–8 we have the following words: "For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that

keep my Sabbaths and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; even unto them will I give in mine house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar: for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people. The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith: Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him."

Let it be noted that here Sabbath observance receives a blessing for Gentiles as well as Jews, and that this blessing is associated with that full ingathering of Gentile believers which was predicted to attend the Messianic dispensation, when Zion should be a house of prayer for all nations. How could words more strongly indicate that the Sabbath belongs to both dispensations?

But the language of Isa. 58 : 13, 14 is still stronger: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine

own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Let the reader observe here that the main scope of this fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah is to dissuade the Jews from a ceremonial righteousness by showing its worthlessness when unaccompanied by spiritual holiness. They are ardently urged to offer God, instead of ritual service, the duties of inward righteousness, and especially of charity. To these the blessing is promised. Now, it is in this connection that the prophet also urges a spiritual Sabbath observance, and to it he repeats the same promises. He also connects this right kind of Sabbath observance immediately with the glorious Messianic triumphs of Zion, which, as we know from all the subsequent history, occur only under the new dispensation. Nowhere does Isaiah better deserve than here the title of "the evangelical prophet." It is simply impossible for the candid reader to take in the anti-ceremonial aim of the whole passage, and to believe that Isaiah here thought of Sabbath observance as only a typical duty.

II. But it is said that the New Testament does repeal the obligation of the Sabbath, and that in the face of this new teaching of Christ and his

apostles the plainest seeming inferences must give way. Let us, then, in *the second place*, consider these passages carefully and candidly. Let us weigh them honestly, listen fairly to all that the learned enemies of the Sabbath have to argue from them, and grapple manfully with their real teachings. We will refer the reader to every verse in the New Testament which has been supposed to bear on the question.

The first we notice are those contained, with some slight variations, in the parallel places of Matt. 12: 1–8; Mark 2: 23–28; Luke 6: 1–5. Matthew's narrative is, on the whole, the fullest:

"At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn [wheat or barley]; and his disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you that in this place is One greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sac-

rifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day."

Now, it is claimed that these words of our Saviour modify and, to a certain extent, repeal the Sabbath law with a view to the new dispensation. The attempt is made to sustain this by pointing to the fact that Jesus here illustrates his point by referring to two other merely ceremonial or positive instances; by which they think he intimates that the Sabbath was as much a positive ceremony as the shew-bread, and thus as reasonably liable to repeal.

The reader, upon supplying from the second and third evangelists what is omitted in the first, will find that our Lord advances five distinct ideas.

His hungry disciples, passing along the footpath through the fields of ripe grain, had availed themselves of the permission of Deut. 23 : 25 to pluck, rub out and eat some grains of wheat or barley as a slight refreshment. The Pharisees, eager to find fault, caviled that Christ had thus permitted his followers to break the Sabbath law by preparing food in sacred time, making this ado about the plucking, rubbing and winnowing of a few heads of grain with their hands as they walked. In defence of them and himself our Saviour says, in the first place, that their hunger was a necessity which justified their departure from the letter of the law in this case, as did David's necessity when, fleeing for his life, he innocently used the shew-bread to

appease his hunger. Second, that the example of the priests, who performed necessary manual labor about the temple (such as skinning and dressing the sacrifices, cleaning the altar and such like) on the Sabbath, and were blameless, justified what his disciples had done. Third, that God prefers compliance with the spirit of his law, calling for humanity, love and mercy, to mere observance of its outer form. For, fourth, God's design in instituting the Sabbath had been a humane one, seeing he designed it not, as the Pharisees regarded their observances, as a galling asceticism, burdensome to the worshiper and ministering only to his self-righteousness, but as a means of promoting the true welfare of his servants. And lastly, that he himself, as the Messiah, was the supreme and present authority in maintaining the Sabbath law, as well as all others of his laws; so that it was enough that he acquitted his disciples of sin; and this pretended zeal for God in the presence of the supreme Lawgiver, God incarnate, was officious and impertinent. Had his disciples really committed an infraction of his Sabbath law, he could have seen to his own rights and honor without the Pharisees' deceitful help. The consistency of this simple view with itself, and the perfectness of its logic in rebuking the cavilers, are a sufficient proof of its faithfulness to the Saviour's meaning.

Now, the modern opponents of our doctrine would have us believe that our Saviour here exerts

his Messianic authority to introduce, for the first time, the freer and more lenient law of the Sabbath for the new dispensation, and to repeal the Mosaic. It will appear that this is a sheer blunder, a bald misconception of the whole case; and the short and simple proof is, that *the Sabbath, as it ought to be observed by Jews under the Mosaic laws,* is what our Saviour is here expounding. The new dispensation had not yet come, and was not to begin until Pentecost. After all this discussion Jesus Christ scrupulously observed every point of the Mosaic law up to his death. He was engaged in the celebration of a Mosaic ordinance, the passover, at the very hour his murderers were arranging for his destruction; it was the last free act of his life. The whole Scriptures concur in teaching us that the change of dispensation resulted only from his death and resurrection. Until those acts were completed the types were unfulfilled, and the grounds of the old dispensation all remained. At the time of this discussion Christ was living as a member of the Jewish Church, for our sakes "fulfilling all its righteousness." If, then, anything were here relaxed, it would be the Mosaic Sabbath, as Jews should keep it, which is the subject of alteration. But there is no repeal of anything; only an explanation. To represent the passage as a change of an Old-Testament law for Old-Testament members would not help the cause of our opponents a particle; and, moreover, it is a thing which could not happen, as the Old-Testa-

ment laws were all perfectly permanent until the time came for the change of dispensation.

The careful reader will see that our Saviour does not plead for any relaxation of the Sabbath law in favor of his disciples; he only asks a correct exposition. The whole drift of his argument is to prove that when it is correctly understood how God intended Jews to keep his Sabbath law, it will appear that his disciples have not, by this act, broken it at all. They need no lowering of its claims in order to escape condemnation.

Bearing this important fact in mind, let us proceed to the second erroneous inference. This is, that our Saviour, by illustrating the Sabbath law from two ceremonial instances, intimates that the Sabbath also was but a Jewish ceremony. But when one observes how the Jewish Scriptures commingle what we call "moral" and "positive" precepts, and how uniformly the Hebrew mind seems to ignore the distinction, this inference will be seen to be utterly worthless. The Jew, in his practical views of duty, never paused to separate the two classes of precepts. Thus, Moses in Exodus connects solemn prohibitions against idolatry with injunctions not to hew the stones for an altar, against eating flesh torn of beasts in the field and bearing false witness. Ezekiel (ch. 18) conjoins eating upon the mountains and taking interest upon a loan with idolatry and oppression, in his charges against the Jews of his day. Yea, we see the apostles them-

selves (Acts 15) warning the Gentile believers in the same breath against fornication and eating a strangled fowl. We do not argue from these facts against the existence of our distinction of "moral" from "positive;" we only show how utterly unwarrantable it is to argue that both of two precepts must be positive only because the sacred writers connect the one with another which is such.

It is inferred again, from Christ's third remark, that the Sabbath command must be ceremonial, because he teaches that the obligation for its observance should give place to that of mercy. This, they suppose, must be on the principle that positive or ceremonial commands give place to those which are moral and perpetual. One reply is, that so do moral duties of a lower grade give place to those of a higher in some cases. Thus, there is a natural, moral and perpetual obligation to worship God, yet any and every form of God's worship would be righteously suspended for a time to save a man perishing in the water. This duty of humanity would take precedence of the other duty of religious worship for the time, because of its greater urgency; an hour later God might still be worshiped acceptably, but the man would be drowned. Prov. 21 : 3 expresses precisely this truth in these words: "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." Both in this place, and in our Saviour's citation from the prophet Samuel (whose words he quotes),

"sacrifice" stands for religious worship in general. This, surely, is not a duty merely ceremonial and positive, yet it is righteously postponed to mercy. Then, our Saviour's postponing a given point of Sabbath observance to mercy does not prove that this is merely ceremonial and positive.

A second answer is, that circumstances may greatly modify the details of duties of the most permanent character. Does any one dispute that the obligation to "honor his parents" is a moral and permanent one of very high order? If parents are aged and dependent, this honor doubtless includes maintenance. Thus, it might be a most urgent and binding duty of a son in England to furnish his aged parents with fuel, while no such obligation would rest on the son of such parents in India, because in that warm climate nobody needs or uses fires in the sitting-rooms. How simple is this! Then it is equally plain that no one is entitled to infer that the Sabbath command is only ceremonial because circumstances alter the times and details of observance.

But the force of the inference is entirely destroyed by the fact that it was not a failure of Sabbath observance which Christ was excusing. He declares that there had been no delinquency. The accused disciples were "guiltless." He explains their act as an incidental labor of necessity, strictly consistent with proper Sabbath observance. There was no overriding of one obligation by another more imperious to be explained.

The perverted gloss of the fourth point, "The Sabbath was made for man," is almost too shallow to need exposure. These writers seem to think that our Saviour meant that God did not design to cramp any man by the Sabbath law, but to allow it to yield in every way to the creature's convenience and gratification. But what Christ here says is that the design of the Sabbath is a humane one—that is, man's true welfare. Then it must be settled what that true welfare is, and how it may be best promoted, before we may conclude that God allows us to do what we please with his holy day. If it turns out that man's true welfare imperatively demands a Sabbath day, fenced with divine authority and faithfully observed, then the humanity of God's motive in appointing it will argue anything else than this license inferred from it. It may be added that a moment's thought of the Pharisees' religious system will show us what ideas our Saviour was exploding by the statement that "the Sabbath was made for man." The religion of that austere and proud sect was intensely self-righteous and formal, and, to a certain degree, ascetic. It was a religion not of love and holiness, but of fear and slavish forms. Their idea of a religious observance was not that of a blessed means of grace, but of an ascetic burden, by bearing which a man might imagine he was making merit, and that a merit proportioned to the irksomeness and difficulty of the form he forced himself to go through with. Now, such

people as these would very naturally think that the more burdensome they made their Sabbaths to themselves by heaping on particulars of man's invention, the more merit they would get. Hence they blamed the disciples for their little act of labor. Our Saviour evidently designs by these words to teach them that they wholly misunderstood the purpose of the Mosaic Sabbath. God did not require the Hebrews (nor any one else) to keep it as a means of ascetic self-punishment, like the papist's hair shirt; but he required them to keep it intelligently and from the heart, as an appointed and blessed means of grace. The pangs of hunger may be a very fit self-punishment if the purpose is that of the self-righteous monk, to make a fancied merit by torturing himself for nothing. But as there is no true religion in bodily hunger, and as it ordinarily interferes with Bible-study and devotion, of course God's idea in giving the Hebrews a Sabbath to sanctify implied that a proper part of that sanctification was for them to eat when they really needed to eat.

But we turn our Saviour's declaration, that "the Sabbath was made *for man*," directly against its adversaries. The word "man" is used in its generic sense—the race. Here, then, we are divinely taught that the Sabbath was made not for the Jews, but for the race, which is precisely our doctrine.

The concluding words of our Saviour in Matthew have suggested an argument which is a little more

plausible. We even find one of the great Reformers paraphrasing those words thus: "The Son of man, agreeably to his authority, is able to relax the Sabbath day just as the other legal ceremonies." And again: "Here he saith that power is given to him to release his people from the necessity of observing the Sabbath." The inference he would draw is, that then the Sabbath must be a ceremonial institution, for we have ourselves argued that moral and permanent laws are founded on the unchangeable nature of God, and will never be changed, because he cannot change. But we deny the exposition. It gives an utterly mistaken and perverted view of our Saviour's real meaning. Our Saviour's own words are: "*For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath.*" Now, the conjunction "*for*" was undoubtedly our Lord's own word, and he makes it emphatic. But these expositors strangely and criminally neglect its force altogether. We see how an erroneous notion of the meaning blinded them. All careful students of the Bible know that this conjunction "for" is usually placed by a sacred writer to introduce the words which state the ground or reason of that which he had just asserted: "Watch, therefore, *for* ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh." The fact that we do not know the day is given as the *reason why* we are told to watch. It is always safest criticism to give a word its usual force if the sense of the passage will bear it. Let

us do so here. Then the meaning is, that the Messiah's being Lord of the Sabbath day is the *reason* why these disciples are innocent.

The Saviour's reasoning is in substance this: "These men, blamed by you Pharisees, are innocent. I saw them pluck and eat the grain. It is enough that I did not forbid them, for I am the Lord of this Sabbath day. This law is my law. I was the person who published it from the top of Mount Sinai (as the divine Angel of the covenant). It is my authority which sustains it. Hence, if I am satisfied with this act of these men, that is proof enough of their innocence."

Such reasoning is clear; and it is conclusive and unanswerable, as the arguments of the Saviour always are when properly understood. Does not this show that we explain him aright?

But if the reader will attend we will show that the sense placed on our Saviour's words by these expositors cannot be right. *They make him contradict himself.* He says, first, that the disciples were innocent, that they needed no excuse; and then they make him say that "he will excuse them by altering the law in their favor, as he has a right to do." The one ground contradicts the other. This explanation would represent the Saviour as stultifying himself by his own words, as we sometimes hear foolish and false children and servants do, when, being charged with an offence, they first deny it and then make an excuse for it. Were such an

explanation willfully urged for Christ's words, it would be profane.

Another proof that they do not represent Christ's words aright is in the fact that Christ did not at that time use his Messianic authority to repeal any Mosaic institution whatever. *The repeal never began until after his resurrection.* It is well known that, on the contrary, he taught his followers to give an exemplary compliance with the Levitical laws in every respect until he had "caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease" by "bringing in everlasting righteousness."

Every gloss which has any bearing against the morality and perpetuity of the Sabbath command has been thus removed from these passages in the Gospels. The statement of our Saviour's argument which we gave at the beginning of the explanation is seen to be consistent and scriptural. This is one of the best tests of its truth. But the reader is entreated to remember that, let the explanation of our Saviour's reasons be what it may, we are bound to hold that it was the true nature of the Mosaic Sabbath which he was unfolding. *It was the Sabbath as binding on Jews under the old dispensation* which he was explaining. So that, let them prove what they may, they have proved nothing whatever as to the manner in which Christians under the new dispensation are required to keep the Sabbath, whether more strictly or more loosely. If they succeed by their erroneous criticism in persuading

themselves that Christ here relaxed the Sabbath law, the only consequence is the unfortunate one of making Christ appear to contradict his own inspired prophets.

This may be a convenient place to notice a supposed difficulty attending our argument. It is said, "If you deny that Christ gives any relaxation of the stringency of the Levitical Sabbath as of a ceremonial yoke, then in consistency you must exact of Christians now as punctilious an observance in every respect as was required of the Jews. You must allow people to make no fire in their dwellings on the Sabbath. You will seek to re-enact the terrible law of Num. 16, which punished a wretch with death for gathering a few sticks on the Sabbath day."

This is only skillful sophistry. No one has asserted that all the details of the Sabbath law in all the books of Moses are of perpetual authority. It has not been denied that at the epoch of Sinai the Sabbath, a holy day for all mankind already, became in addition a sign and a day of typical worship to the "peculiar people." The two instances mentioned are the only plausible ones which can be advanced against us; and it must be noticed that they are not taken from the Decalogue, *but from subsequent revelations which contain many ceremonials and peculiar political rules suited to Hebrews only.* No one argues, for instance, as to the second commandment—which all admit to be of perpetual

and moral authority—that it perpetuates all the rites of the altar for ever. The Westminster Catechism declares that the purpose of the second commandment is to require the "keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in his word." After the twentieth chapter of Exodus there follow in the same book many ordinances enjoining bloody sacrifices, incense and shew-bread. No one has been so heedless as to think these ritual details were intended by God to be explicative of the perpetual obligation of "keeping pure and entire" his appointed divine worship. Why should they commit the similar folly in the fourth commandment? We repeat: The moral and perpetual obligation is what was spoken by the Messiah's own voice from the top of Sinai in the "Ten Words," and what was carved by his own fingers on the imperishable stone. What follows in the Levitical books may be only explicative of ritual details appropriate to the Jews, like the incense and shew-bread. Whether a given detail is such, or is explicative of the permanent part of the obligation, this must be found out, not by rashly "jumping to a conclusion," but by the careful and faithful comparison of scripture with scripture.

Now, in the Sabbath command that which is of perpetual moral obligation is what is founded on the rights of God and the nature of man; and this is the true sanctification to his public and private

worship of such stated times as he claims. This he tells us is one day out of seven. Other details that follow may or may not be ritual.

There are several scriptural facts which give us a safe guidance as to these details.

First. The Sabbath became to the Jew at the Mosaic epoch not only what it had always been to all men—a sacred day of worship—but a sign and a day of sacrifices. It ranked with his new-moon days. This must attach to its observance, for a Jew, features of exactness and mechanical regularity above what its moral observance required.

Next. The government was a theocracy; no line whatever separated the secular and sacred statutes. The God who was the religious object of the Hebrews' worship was also the political king of the commonwealth. He was setting up a very strict ritual for the purpose of making a rigid separation between the Hebrews and the pagans around them. Hence, willful breaches of ordinances bore the character of treason against the divine King of the nation, and might be naturally and properly punished as capital crimes. Idolatry and persuading another to idolatry were capital crimes in the theocracy, and properly so. But it would not be proper for the State of California to punish the Chinese there for their idolatry with death, because that State is not a theocracy, and Church and State are properly separate. So, the State of Virginia ought not to punish Sabbath-breaking in its worst form with

death. Of course, it will not punish capitally the gathering of sticks to make a fire on the Sabbath. The Christian Church has no power of corporal punishment for any crime.

Third. Hebrew houses had no hearths or chimneys except for cooking, because in that mild climate the people made no use of fire in their sitting-rooms. Hence the injunction to make no fire in their dwellings on the Sabbath day amounted precisely to an injunction not to cook food on that day. There is a wide and necessary difference in the species of food on which civilized man subsists in our latitude and the national food of ancient Israel. This, with the necessary use of fuel in winter among us, may make some slight difference of detail in the application of the Jewish rule against cooking food on the Sabbath, especially for the sick and infirm. But as to the spirit of the prohibition, it ought undoubtedly to be held among us, as among the Jews, that with these exceptions no culinary labors should have place on the Sabbath. To allow ourselves further license in this is to palter with the essential substance of the perpetual command—the sanctification of one whole day out of seven from all secular labors, except those of necessity and mercy, to God's religious service. These culinary labors, as pursued in so many families in America and Britain even, are a robbery of servants, depriving them of their Sabbath, and a transgression of God's will, for the mere indulgence of luxury in eating.

This sin doubtless cries to God fearfully, even from these Protestant lands.

The only other places in the New Testament which can be used against our theory of Sabbath obligation are from the Epistles. They also form a group, and may be viewed together.

Rom. 14 : 5, 6 : "One man esteemeth one day above another : another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day regardeth it unto the Lord ; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks ; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks." Gal. 4 : 9–11 : "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labor in vain." Col. 2 : 16, 17 : "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days : which are a shadow of things to come ; but the body is of Christ."

Those who oppose the divine obligation of the Christian Sabbath make the following use of these passages : They say that they find in them the same two arguments seen in the passages from the evangelists : first, that the apostle calls the Sabbath a

shadow or type, and we know that the types are abolished; second, that the apostle here discusses Sabbath observance on the same footing with the distinctions of clean and unclean meats, which shows that he thought of the Sabbath only as a positive and ceremonial command. They also claim that the apostle here, by his inspired authority, abolishes all distinctions of days whatsoever from that time onward, and absolutely makes all days alike for Christians. Their account of this amazing revolution is the following: The old dispensation, they say, was dark, unspiritual, slavish, adapted to the Church in its infancy, and hence burdened with many grievous rites which were in themselves of no real spiritual use to souls; but they served to keep the stupid and childish minds of the Old-Testament worshipers reminded of the curse of a broken law under which they lay, and anxious for the gospel deliverance. When that deliverance came, say they, all these burdensome shadows were lifted off; they had fulfilled their purpose; and among them was removed all obligation to keep any one day as more sacred than another day. This, say they, follows from the truth that gospel love and gratitude in a pardoned and sanctified believer's heart consecrates every day. He "does all for the glory of God." His ploughing and building and buying and selling are all done in a devout spirit; they are all a worship of God. Every day is to him virtually a Sabbath day, and thus there is no room for

a distinction of days under the new dispensation. Hence they charge that he who transfers the divine obligation of the seventh day to the first, and regards the Lord's day as a divine, Christian Sabbath, is but judaizing. He is still in bondage; he has not come out into the liberty and love of the gospel, and he does not even understand it.

But we ask them whether the apostle in these very passages (Rom. 14 : 5, 6) does not allow the keeping of days, and admit that he that does it "keepeth them to the Lord"? And do not these very divines hold that the Church does right to make the Lord's day a day of leisure and of public worship? And do they not also keep Easter and Whitsuntide, two days of mere human appointment? They have an answer ready. They say, Yes; the leisure is a benefit and respite to domestic servants and work-animals. Some day must be agreed on by human ecclesiastical authority for concerted public worship. And, chiefly, the apostle sets them the example of allowing a distinction of days to weaker Christians who have not attained to that higher experience which can make every day a Sabbath, which is the proper standard of the new dispensation. The apostle remarks that while some Christians—those, namely, of higher attainments—"regard every day alike," others—the weaker and foolisher—"esteem one day above another." The wiser must make allowances for the weaker, and permit, or even encourage, them to employ these

Jewish crutches for their weakness until they can get upon better grounds of religious experience.

Such is the view of the three passages taken by this class of writers.

The first remark we make upon it is that, whether we can advance a better one or not, theirs cannot stand. For, first, it undertakes expressly to repeal one command and expunge it from the Decalogue. It arrays Paul against Christ. Christ put that command in the "Ten Words," which contained nothing but the perpetual moral law; he carved them in stone, a symbol of their perpetuity; they came from the immediate mouth of God, who "spake no more," spake no mere ceremonial matter in this way; he imposed this command on foreigners, who were neither required nor permitted to observe the ceremonial commands while Gentiles. But this scheme represents Paul as putting the Sabbath command among mere ceremonials. Now, it is not to be believed that two inspired by the same God contradicted each other, or that a part of that law has been abolished of which our Saviour declared, "Heaven and earth shall pass before one jot or tittle of it shall fail."

Second. The reason assigned by these writers for thinking the Sabbath of divine appointment unsuitable for the gospel dispensation is foolish. God thought that a Sabbath day suited our holy first parents in Paradise. Is the Christian experience of any poor, fallen sinner who has become a gospel

believer higher and purer than that of Adam while he was "in the image and likeness of God"? Do any of these more thoroughly consecrate their common labor, and make every working day a Sabbath day more, than Adam did? Yet God thought Adam needed a literal Sabbath, one day in seven. Or we might show the foolishness of this view by comparing ourselves with Old-Testament saints. Was the Psalmist, who wrote the one hundred and sixteenth Psalm—was holy Isaiah, such a stranger to grace, to gratitude, to gospel self-dedication, that he did not know how to consecrate his whole life to his Saviour? Surely no sinner saved by grace under the gospel ever had a soul more baptized with these blessed affections than David and Isaiah. In fact, when a believer now desires to pour out his love and gratitude to his God, he usually borrows the hymns of Old-Testament devotion in which to do it. Yet nobody disputes that God required David and Isaiah to keep a Sabbath day.

The truth is, that this feeble notion had its origin among a school of half-reformed divines who were heretical as to the gospel character of the old dispensation, and who even held that believers under it had no certain gospel light or hope, and that the dispensation was not a spiritual one at all. We cannot thus contradict both Testaments; and to us, therefore, this dream that a regular holy day is unsuited to the more spiritual and thankful experience of the new dispensation can only be absurd.

Third. A just view of human nature and of religious experience proves that believers of all ages do need a regular Sabbath day—that it is useful, yea, necessary, for them, and a blessing to their souls. Man is a creature of habit; he is a finite creature; he cannot do two things at the same time. His soul needs just such an ordinance.

The reader must note that the Bible speaks of the Sabbath not as a ritual burden laid on the neck of the Church because it was in its minority, but *as a privilege and a blessing.* We are "to call the Sabbath a delight, holy to the Lord, and honorable" (Isa. 58 : 13); "*Blessed* is the man . . . that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it" (Isa. 56 : 2); "The Sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2 : 27); "The Lord *blessed* the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex. 20 : 11). The argument is this: Since the Sabbath is a needed blessing, if God has abrogated the Jewish Sabbath and given to us no Christian Sabbath in place of it, the new dispensation is less blessed than the old. But who can admit this? Did kings and prophets desire to see the less blessed day rather than their own? The new dispensation is always represented in the Bible as more blessed than the old, more crowned with privilege and better furnished with means of grace.

Fourth. This view represents the apostle, an inspired man, as setting up a standard of Christian experience which was found in practice unsuited to human nature. That Christians did observe sacred

days in the apostle's time these writers admit, and also that the usage was approved. But they say it was not founded on any divine authority; the apostle had just repealed all that. Then on whose authority? That of the uninspired Church. Their view, then, is, that the apostle, sweeping away all Sabbaths and Lord's days, invites Christians to ascend to his lofty and devoted experience, which had no use for a set Sabbath because all his days were consecrated. But as it was found that this did not suit the actual Christian state of most Christians, human authority was allowed, and even encouraged, to appoint Sundays, Easters and Whitsuntides for them. The objections are: First, that this countenances "will-worship," or the intrusion of man's inventions into God's service; second, it is an implied insult to Paul's inspiration, assuming that he made a practical blunder, which the Church synods, wiser than his inspiration, had to mend by a human expedient; and third, we have here a practical confession that, after all, the average New-Testament Christian does need a stated holy day, and therefore the ground of the Sabbath command is perpetual and moral.

For these reasons it is impossible for us to agree that the apostle Paul meant what these men say. What, then, did he mean in the three passages? A few historical facts will plainly tell us; and *these facts are not disputed* by those who differ from us.

After the new dispensation was set up, the Christians converted from among the Jews had generally combined the worship of Judaism with that of Christianity. They observed the Lord's day, baptism and the Lord's Supper, but they also continued to keep the seventh day, circumcision and the passover. Nor was this wrong *for them* during the transition state. Acts (ch. 21) tells us that the apostle Paul did so himself. But at first it was proposed by them to enforce this double system on all Gentile Christians as a permanent one. Of this plan we have the full history in Acts 15, where it was rebuked by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. A certain part of the Jewish Christians (out of which ultimately grew the Ebionite sect) continued, however, to observe the forms of both dispensations, and restless spirits among the churches planted by Paul, which contained both Jewish and Gentile members, continued to make trouble on this point. Some of them conjoined with this Ebionite view the graver heresy of justification by the merit of ritual and ascetic observances, as we see in the Epistles to the Galatians and Colossians. Thus at that day this spectacle was exhibited: In the mixed Christian churches some brethren went to the synagogue on Saturday and to the church on Sunday, keeping both days holy. Other brethren (Gentiles) paid no respect to Saturday, and kept only Sunday. Others again (Jews) felt bound to keep not only Saturday and Sunday, but all the Jewish sacred times—the

new moons, the paschal, pentecostal and atonement feasts and the sabbatical years. Here was ground of difference and of mutual accusations. This was the mischief to which the apostle had to bring a remedy. We may add that the question about clean and unclean meats was mingled with that about Jewish days. Was it right now for any Jewish Christian to do as the Gentile Christians did —use bacon, lard and the butcher's meat of animals which had been killed at pagan altars?

Now, let us see the divine truth and wisdom with which the apostle settled the disputes. One thing which he enjoins (at the end of Rom. 14) is, that whether any man's light is wholly correct or not, he must act conscientiously. He must not do the thing which honestly seemed to him wrong, for if he did there was sin—the sin of outraging his own conscience, even though his scruple turned out to be a mistake. Then, first of all, let everybody act conscientiously. He tells them, secondly (Rom. 14: 3, 4), not to be censorious, but to respect each other's conscientious convictions, even when they seemed groundless. For there is no positive sin in itself in letting alone bacon, for instance, or stopping work on Saturday; and if a brother's mind is under error as to the duty of doing so, he deserves our respect at least for conscientiously denying himself in these things. But, third: When the apostle saw some professed Christians teaching that a man should make self-righteous merit by continuing to bur-

den himself with the Jewish new moons, sabbaths, fasts, annual passover feasts and sabbatical years after the obligation of them was in fact repealed, he confessed that this alarmed him (Gal. 4 : 11), and made him feel as though all his trouble in preaching salvation by free grace to them was to go for nothing. For this idea of making merit by observing self-imposed ceremonies and troublesome rites was entirely a different matter from those other conscientious mistakes, and it involved the very poison of will-worship and self-righteousness. Hence (Col. 2 : 16 to end), he expressly and solemnly condemns it all. This never had been the gospel either under the Old Testament or the New. To appoint the means of grace for his people—this was God's part. As long as any ordinance was commanded by him, our part was to make use of it, humbly and faithfully, *as a means of grace*, in order to strengthen the faith and repentance which bring us to the Saviour. But the moment any man undertook to build up his self-righteousness on will-worship he was under a soul-destroying error which must not be tolerated one moment. Hence the apostle commands that these Jewish holy days, feasts and fasts are not to be enforced on anybody; and he explains that they were no longer binding, because that new dispensation of which they were shadows or types had now come, with its own divinely-appointed ordinances, and taken the place of others. He did not design to be understood as

speaking at all of the Lord's day, which is one of these New-Testament ordinances. He means only the Jewish holy days. Does not the consistency of this view with itself and the Scriptures show that it is the true one?

But some one may rejoin that he was speaking of the Lord's day also, because he says (Col. 2 : 16), "Let no man, therefore, judge you in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, *or of the Sabbath days.*" This objector is under a delusion. The word "Sabbath" is never applied by a New-Testament writer or by one of the writers of the primitive Church to the Lord's day or Christian Sabbath —never once. This all learned critics admit. All those early writers carefully reserve the word "Sabbath" (which is a Hebrew word) to denote the holy days of the Old Testament; and when they would speak of the holy day of the New Testament they call it "first day of the week" or "Lord's day" or "Sunday." The Westminster Assembly did indeed say of the Lord's day, "which is the Christian Sabbath." This was intended to teach an important truth which had been denied by the objectors, that the Lord's day is to us by divine appointment what the Sabbath was to the Jews as to its main substance.

The word "sabbath" was of wide significance among the Jews. It meant not only the hallowed seventh day, but also the "week" or space of seven days. The Pharisee says: "I fast twice in

the week" (Luke 18 : 12). In the Greek it is "twice in the Sabbath." The word was also a common name for all the Jewish festivals, including even the whole sabbatical year, with new moons, passovers and such-like holy days. "I gave them my Sabbaths [my religious festivals] to be a sign between them and me" (Ezek. 20 : 12). "The land shall enjoy her Sabbaths" (Lev. 23 : 24; 26 : 34; compare 2 Chron. 36 : 21). Hence, the apostle's mention of "Sabbath days" does not certainly prove that he alluded to the seventh day particularly; he may have used the word as a common name for Jewish holy days. Be this as it may, we know that he did not intend the Lord's day, because the early writers never apply that name to it.

This Christian holy day is not in question, then, in these texts, for about the observance of this we believe there was no dispute or diversity in the churches. To the sanctification of that Jewish and Gentile Christians alike consented. When Paul teaches that the observing or not observing of a day is, like the matter of meats, non-essential, the natural and fair construction is that he means those days which were in debate, and no others. When he implies that some innocently "regarded every day alike," we should understand every one of those days about which there was no diversity, not the Christian's Lord's day, about which there was no dispute. The passage in Colossians is upon the

same subject with those in Romans and Galatians. Hence it is fair to regard the one as an explanation of the others. Thus, the use of the phrase "Sabbath days" in the first is an advantage to our cause, for it explains the "every day alike" of Romans as really meaning "every sabbatical day;" that is to say, every Jewish holy day, such being the precise meaning of "Sabbath" in Paul's mouth.

One more objection to our view remains, which we wish to meet fairly. It is this: Grant that by the phrase "Sabbath days" in Colossians the apostle did not mean to include the Lord's day. He says of all the Jewish *sabbata*, including the seventh days, "which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." It thus appears that the Sabbath day of the fourth commandment was a type, the substance of which was to be found in Christ, even as the passover was a type of him. Why, then, should not the Sabbath pass away with the passover and the other types? There is no positive New-Testament law re-enacting it. Thus our opponents.

The answer is: The Jewish Sabbath was a sign, and also something else. Its witnessing use has passed away for Jews, so far as it was to them a sign of their exodus, their peculiar theocratic covenant and their title to the land of Canaan. But its other uses, as a means of grace and sign of heaven, remain for them and for all. Moreover, the Christian Sabbath, which is the Lord's day, remains just as much a "sign" of our Christian sep-

aration from the world and engagement to be the Lord's as the seventh day ever was to the Jew. And our faithfulness in sanctifying the Lord's day ought to be as plain a mark distinguishing us from unbelievers as that which distinguished the Hebrews from the Amorites. That it always was more than a mark we proved in the first division of this discussion. It is as old as the race; it was given to all the race. The ground of the institution is as universal as the race, the completion of creation. It is dictated by a universal necessity of man's nature, which has not at all changed in passing from one dispensation to another. It was in full force before the typical ceremonies of Moses. It was enjoined on Gentiles, who had no business with those ceremonies. It had its permanent, moral and spiritual use before Moses came. God then placed an additional sacrifice on it for a particular purpose. When the typical dispensation passed away, then this temporary use of the Sabbath fell off, and the original institution remains. God's day is now to us just what it was to Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham. How reasonable this is may be shown from the very comparison which the objector makes, that of the passover. The passover was a type, but it was something else—a commemoration of redemption. It foreshadowed "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," but it commemorated the redemption of the people from death in Egypt. Now, let us see what happened. The Lamb

of God came, and was actually sacrificed on Calvary, "by one offering taking away sin." *Was the passover revoked?* Not at all. Its typical part was revoked; the lamb was no more killed and roasted. But its commemorative part remains to this day. The bread and wine are still consecrated by divine appointment for a sacrament, and the Lord's Supper remains as *the Christian's passover*. This is just what the apostle teaches in 1 Cor. 5 : 7, 8.

When Israel came to Sinai, God did select this Sabbath day, which had existed before as a commemoration of creation and a moral and spiritual ordinance for all people, to serve the additional purpose of a "sign" between him and Israel. It was a pledge and emblem of their covenant as his peculiar people (Deut. 5 : 13; Ex. 31 : 13; Ezek. 20 : 12). It was for a time possibly an emblem of their peaceful home in Canaan (Heb. 4 : 4–11). It is for us, as for them, an emblem of our gracious rest in heaven (Heb. 4 : 9). Thus, the observance of the Sabbath was, like that of the new moon, marked by two additional sacrifices. These temporary uses passed away, of course, with the coming of the new dispensation. But the moral and perpetual uses of the ordinance having been already transferred by Christ to the Lord's day, the seventh day remained at the time of Paul's writing as mere a shadow to the New-Testament saint as a new moon. In this aspect the apostle might well argue that the stickling for it betrayed judaizing. Moreover, when the

apostle says (Col. 2 : 17) that the new moons and Sabbath days are a "shadow of things to come," his real meaning is, the sacrifices celebrated on those days were the shadow. Literally, the days themselves were not shadows, but only the typical services appointed on them.

III. We shall now, in the third place, attempt to show the ground on which the Sabbath "from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord's day, and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath." This proof is chiefly historical, and divides itself into two branches, the inspired and the uninspired. The first proceeds upon two plain principles. One is, that example may be as valid and instructive a guide to duty as precept. Or, to state it in another form, the precedent set by Christ and his apostles may be as binding as their command. The other is, that whatever necessarily follows from Scripture "by good and necessary consequence" is as really authorized by it as "what is expressly set down."

Our first argument shows that every probability is in favor of the Sunday's being now God's day, in advance of particular testimony. We prove under the first main head that a Sabbath institution is universal and perpetual—that the command to keep it holy belongs to that law from which one jot or one tittle cannot pass till heaven and earth pass. But the

apostle Paul (in Col. 2 : 16, 17) clearly tells us that the seventh day is no longer the Sabbath. It has been changed. To what other day has it been changed? The law is not totally repealed; it cannot be. What day has taken the place of the seventh? None is so likely to be the substitute as the Lord's day; this must be the day.

The main direct argument is found in the fact that Christ and his apostles did, from the very day of the resurrection, hallow the first day of the week as a religious day. To see the full force of this fact we must view it in the light of the first argument. We remember that the disciples, like all men of all ages, are bound by the Decalogue to keep holy God's Sabbath. We see them remit the observance of the seventh day as no longer binding, and we see them observing the first. Must we not conclude that these inspired men regarded the authority of God as now attaching to this Lord's day?

We shall find, then, that the disciples commenced the observance of the first day on the very day of Christ's resurrection, and thenceforward continued it. John 20 : 19 tells us that the "same day, being the first day of the week," the disciples were assembled at evening with closed doors, and Christ came and stood in the midst. Can we doubt that they met for worship? In the twenty-sixth verse we learn, "And after eight days again the disciples were within, and Thomas with

them" (who had been absent before). "Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." None will doubt that this was also a meeting for worship, and the language implies that it was their second meeting. Now, it is admitted by all that the Jews, in counting time, always included in their count the days with which the period began and ended. The best-known instance of this rule is seen in the rising of Christ. He was to be "three days in the heart of the earth," but the three days were made out only by counting the day of his death and the day of his rising, although the latter event happened early in the morning of that day. By this mode of counting the eighth day, or full week from the disciples' first meeting, brings us again to the first day of the week. Thus we learn that twice at least between the resurrection and Pentecost the first day was kept as the Lord's day.

But the decisive instance is that of Pentecost itself. The reader will see, by consulting Lev. 23 : 15, 16 or Deut. 15 : 9, that this day was fixed in the following manner: On the morrow after that Sabbath (seventh day) which was included within the passover week a sheaf of the earliest ripe corn was cut, brought fresh into the sanctuary and presented as a thank-offering unto God. Thus, the day of this ceremony must always be the first day of the week, corresponding to our Lord's day. From this day they were to count seven weeks complete,

and the fiftieth day was to be Pentecost day, or the beginning of their "feast of ingathering." Remembering, now, that the Israelites always included in their reckoning the day from which and the day to which they counted, we see that the fiftieth day brings us again to the first day of the week. We are told expressly that Christ rose on the first day of the week.

We thus learn the important fact that the day selected by God for setting up the gospel dispensation and for the great pentecostal outpouring was the Lord's day—a significant and splendid testimony to the sacred honor it was intended to have in the Christian ages.

This epoch was indeed the creation of a new world in the spiritual sense. The work was equal in glory and everlasting moment to that first creation which caused "the morning stars to sing together and all the sons of God to shout for joy." Well might God substitute the first day for the seventh when the first day had now become the sign of two separate events, the rising of Christ and the founding of the new dispensation, either of which is as momentous and blessed to us as the world's foundation.

But we read in Acts 1 : 14 and 2 : 1 that this seventh Lord's day was also employed by the apostles and disciples as a day for religious worship; and it was while they were thus engaged that they received the divine sanction in their blessed baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost. Then the first pub-

lic proclamation of the gospel under the new dispensation began, and the model was set up for the consecration of the new Christian Sabbath (not by the burning of additional lambs) by public preaching, the two sacraments of baptism and the Supper and the oblation of their worldly substance to God. At this all-important stage every step, every act, of the divine providence recorded by inspiration in the Acts was formative and fundamental. Hence we must believe that this event was meant by God as a forcible precedent, establishing the Lord's day as our Christian Sabbath.

Let the reader carefully weigh this question: Have we any other kind of warrant for the framework of the Church? All Christians, for instance, believe that the deacon's office in the Church is of perpetual divine appointment. Even Rome has it, though perverted. What is the basis of that belief? The precedent set in the sixth chapter of Acts. The apostles there say, It is not good "for us to leave the word of God and serve tables," etc. They do not say even as much about the universal perpetuity of this office as Paul says to Titus (ch. 1 : 5) about the elder's office: "Ordain elders in every city." But all sensible men see that the principle stated and the example set are enough, and that the Holy Spirit obviously taught the inspired historians to relate this formative act of the new dispensation as a model for all churches. The warrant for making the Lord's day the Sabbath is of the same kind.

It is most evident, from the New-Testament history, that the apostles and the churches they planted uniformly hallowed the Lord's day. The instances are not numerous, but they are distinct.

The next clear instance is in Acts 20 : 7. The apostle Paul was now returning from his famous mission to Macedonia and Achaia in full prospect of captivity at Jerusalem. He stops at the favorite little church of Troas, on the Asiatic coast, a little south of the Hellespont, to spend a week with his converts there: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them (ready to depart on the morrow), and continued his speech until midnight." Here we have a double evidence of our point. First, Paul preached to the disciples on this day, while he had been, as the sixth verse shows, a whole week at Troas, including the Jewish Sabbath. Why did he wait a whole week? Why did not the meeting, with the sermon and sacrament, take place on the Jewish Sabbath? We learn from verse sixteen that Paul had very little time to spare, because he had to make the whole journey from Philippi to Jerusalem, with all his wayside visits, within the six weeks between the end of the paschal and beginning of the pentecostal feast. He was obviously waiting for the Church's sacred day in order to join them in their public worship, just as a missionary would wait now under similar circumstances. But, second. The words

"When the disciples came together to break bread" show that the first day of the week was the one on which they met to celebrate the Lord's Supper. So it appears that this church at Troas, planted and trained by Paul, kept the first day of the week for public worship and the sacrament, and the inspired man puts himself to some inconvenience to comply with their usage. It has indeed been objected that he selected this day not because it was the Lord's day, but because he could not wait any longer. This is exploded by the fact that he had already waited six days, including the Jewish Sabbath; he was evidently waiting for this day because it was the Lord's day.

The next clear instance is in 1 Cor. 16:1, 2: "Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." We here learn two things: that the weekly oblation of almsgiving was fixed for the Lord's day, and that this rule was enacted not only for the church of Corinth, but for all the churches of Galatia. It seems a very clear inference that the apostle afterward made the rule uniform in other churches as he organized them. Again, we find the objectors arguing that, admitting what we claim, we have not proved that there was any regular public worship on the Lord's day, because it is said, "Lay by you in store;" that is,

at home. But the answers are two: The words, "Lay by him," etc., are, literally, "place to himself" or "segregate"—"treasuring according as the Lord hath prospered him." It is a misunderstanding of the apostle's meaning to take the word "treasuring" as putting a piece of money on Sunday morning in a separate box or purse at home. Most frequently, as we know from history, it was not money, but bread, meat, fruit, clothing, a part of anything with which Providence had blessed them; and the *undoubted usage* in the earliest age after the apostles was to carry this oblation with them to church every Lord's day morning and give it to the deacons, who put it into a common stock for charitable uses. The words "treasuring it" refer, says Calvin, to a wholly different idea—to that which our Saviour expresses (Matt. 6 : 20): "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven;" to that idea which the charitable Christian expressed on his tombstone: "What I kept, I lost; what I gave away, I have." It is the Lord's treasury which the apostle here has in view—the Lord's "store." So that the natural meaning of the precept is fairly presented in this paraphrase: "Let every one every Sunday morning set apart, according as the Lord hath prospered him, what he intends to carry to church with him to put into the Lord's store." But, second. Even if we contradict the unanimous voice of history, testifying that the weekly oblation took place at the church-meeting and went at once into the deacon's hands, the truth

remains that this oblation was an act of worship. (See Phil. 4 : 18 ; 2 Cor. 9 : 12, 13.) This weekly oblation was, then, a weekly act of worship, and it was appointed by inspired authority to be done on the Lord's day. That makes this day a sacred day of worship ; we care not whether this oblation was public or private, so far as this argument is concerned.*

* The next place to be cited is Heb. 4 : 9. This verse (with its context, which must be carefully read) teaches that, as there remains to believers under the Christian dispensation a hope of an eternal rest, so there remains to us an earthly Sabbath to foreshadow it. The points to be noticed in the explanation of the chapter are: That God has an eternal spiritual rest; that he invited Old-Testament believers to share it; that it is something higher than Israel's home in Canaan, because after Joshua had fully installed Israel in that rest, God's rest is still held up as something future. The seventh day (verse 4) was the memorial of God's rest, and was thus connected with it. It was under the old dispensation, as under the new, a spiritual *faith* which introduced into God's rest, and it was unbelief which excluded from it. But as God's rest was something higher than a home in Canaan, and was still offered in the ninety-fifth Psalm long after Joshua settled Israel in that rest, it follows (verse 9) that there still remains a sabbatism, or Sabbath-keeping, for God's people under the new dispensation; and hence (verse 11) we ought to seek to enter into that spiritual rest of God, which is by faith. Now, let it be noted that the word for God's "rest" throughout the passage is a different one from "Sabbath." But the apostle's inference is that because God still offers us his "rest" under the new dispensation, *there remaineth to us a Sabbath-keeping under this dispensation.* What does this mean? Is the sabbatism identically our "rest" in faith? But the seventh day was not identically that rest; it was the memorial and emblem of it. So now sabbatism is the memorial and em-

The other instance of apostolic consecration of the first day is perhaps the most instructive of all. In Rev. 1 : 10, John, when about to describe how he came to have this revelation, says, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day." The venerable apostle was "in the isle that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus." We know from history exactly what this means. The pagan magistrates had banished him to this rocky, desolate islet in the Ægæan Sea as a punishment for preaching the gospel and testifying that Jesus is our risen Saviour. He was there alone, separated from all his brethren. But he "was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." What does this mean? It means that he was doing what godly people now call "keeping Sunday." He was engaging in spiritual exercises. He was holding communion with the Holy Spirit. Here, then, is our first point: that although in solitude, cut off alike from Christian meetings and ordinary week-day occupations by his banishment, the inspired apostle was "keeping Sunday." It is the strongest possible example. Our second point is, that God blessed him in his Sabbath-keeping with the greatest spiritual blessing which perhaps he had enjoyed since he sat at the feet of Jesus. His Saviour came down from glory to "keep Sunday" with him. Our third and strongest

blem of the rest. Because the rest is ours, therefore the Sabbath-keeping is still ours; heaven and its earthly type belong equally to both dispensations.

point is, that the inspired man here calls the day "the Lord's day." There is no doubt but that the "Lord" named is the glorified Redeemer, whom he declares in his epistle to be "the true God and eternal life." There is but one consistent and scriptural sense to place on this name of the day. It is the day that belongs especially to the Lord. But as all our days belong in one sense to him, the only meaning is that the first day of the week is now set apart and hallowed to Christ. In Isa. 58 : 13 the Sabbath is called by God "my holy day;" in 56 : 4, "my Sabbath." That was God's day; it belonged to God. This is Christ's day, and in the same sense belongs to Christ. It is consecrated to his worship as was the Sabbath; it is virtually "the Christian Sabbath."

We now add the uninspired testimony of the early historians and Fathers, showing that from the apostles' days Christians understood this matter as we do, and consecrated the first day of the week.

But let us explain in what sense we use this human testimony. In our view, all the uninspired church testimony in the world, however venerable, would never make it our religious duty to keep Sunday as a Sabbath without God's own commandment. We use these "Fathers" simply as historical witnesses. Their evidence derives its sole value from its relevancy to this point, *whether the apostles, who were inspired, left the command and precedent in the churches of observing the Lord's day as the Sab-*

bath of the fourth commandment. If they said, "We Fathers command you to observe Sunday," we should reject the authority as nothing worth. But when, as honest and well-informed witnesses, they testify that the apostles taught the churches to observe Sunday, we regard their testimony as of some value.

Our first witness, then, is a learned pagan, Pliny the Younger, a high magistrate under the emperor Trajan. He says, in a letter written a little after the death of the apostle John, that the Christians were accustomed to meet for worship on "a stated day." This was the Lord's day, as we see from other witnesses.

Ignatius, the celebrated martyr-bishop of Antioch, says, in his Epistle to the Magnesians, written not more than twenty years after the death of John, that "this is the Lord's day, the day consecrated to the resurrection, the chief and queen of all the days."

Justin Martyr, who died about A. D. 160, says that the Christians "neither celebrated the Jewish festivals, nor observed their Sabbaths, nor practiced circumcision" (*Dialogue with Trypho*). In another place he says that they were "all accustomed to meet on the day which is denominated Sunday, for reading the Scriptures, prayer, exhortation and communion. The assemblies met on Sunday, because this is the first day on which God, having changed the darkness and the elements, created the world,

and because Jesus our Lord on this day rose from the dead," etc.

Tertullian, at the close of the second century, says: We Christians "celebrate Sunday as a joyful day. On the Lord's day we think it wrong to fast or to kneel in prayer." It was a common opinion of the early Christians that all public prayers on the Lord's day should be uttered standing, because kneeling is a more sorrowful attitude and inconsistent with the joy and blessedness of Christ's day.

Clement of Alexandria, a very learned Christian contemporary with Tertullian, says: "A true Christian, according to the commands of the gospel, observes the Lord's day by casting out all bad thoughts and cherishing all goodness, honoring the resurrection of the Lord, which took place on that day."

Perhaps the most valuable, because the most important and explicit, as well as the most learned, witness, is Eusebius of Cæsarea, who was in his prime about A. D. 325. In a commentary on the ninety-second Psalm, which, the reader will remember, is entitled, "A psalm or song for the Sabbath day," he says: "The Word" (Christ) "by the new covenant translated and transferred the feast of the Sabbath to the morning light, and gave us the symbol of the true rest, the saving Lord's day, the first of light, in which the Saviour gained the victory over death. On this day, which is the first of the Light and the true Sun, we assemble after the interval of six days, and celebrate

holy and spiritual Sabbath; even all nations redeemed by him throughout the world assemble, and do those things according to the spiritual law which were decreed for the priests to do on the Sabbath. All things which it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day, as more appropriately belonging unto it, because it has the precedence, and is first in rank, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath. It hath been enjoined on us that we should meet together on this day; and it is evidence that we should do these things announced in this psalm."

These citations from the pastors of the early Church might be continued to great length. Not only individuals, but church councils, added their sanctions to the sacred observance of the Lord's day. Thus, the Council of Laodicea (A. D. 363) commanded Christians to rest on the Lord's day from all secular labors except those imposed by necessity. Many other councils during the fourth century ordain that public worship and the sacraments shall be observed on the same day. It may be asked, If this sanctification of the Lord's day was of divine appointment through the apostles, why do we not hear of earlier councils enacting its observance nearer the days of the apostles? The answer is very simple: During the ages of persecution, which only ceased with the accession of Constantine, councils could meet rarely and with great peril, and the persecutors busily destroyed their records.

Those who are familiar with the controversy about the Lord's day are aware that quite a number of writers, especially those of prelatical views, are in the habit of roundly asserting that the "Fathers" held the fourth commandment to be abrogated; that they grounded their observance of the Lord's day not on God's authority, but on comity, convenience and church authority, like the other feasts; and that no "Father" bases the observance of the Lord's day on the fourth commandment expressly. They are very fond of quoting the great Augustine, for instance, as teaching that the fourth commandment alone among the ten was "partly figurative," and so abolished with the other types. The arrogancy and dogmatism with which these assertions are made by prelatic adversaries of God's law are offensive to every fair and reverent mind. Those who are best acquainted with these Fathers will be least disposed to attach importance to their assertions, whether concurrent with or against God's truth. Had these prelatists, for instance, the honesty to *quote all* that their favorite Augustine says in that same exposition of the Decalogue, the sensible reader would feel the contempt for his opinions on this subject which they deserve. We should see this great Father expounding each of the ten commandments as typified in the "ten plagues of the Egyptians," and gravely running a fanciful analogy between a given precept and a given plague! The fact is,

that even the more learned Fathers (Augustine had little Greek and no Hebrew learning) were prevented by certain valid causes from taking a point of view whence they could properly appreciate the relations of the old dispensation and the new. The reasons were these: A good knowledge of Hebrew was rare. Judaism was only known to the Christians of those ages in its worst phase of Phariseeism, because all truly-believing Jews, of the type of Symeon, Anna, Matthew, etc., had gladly acceded to Christianity and been absorbed into the Christian Church. Hence it was a natural mistake to confound the true Old-Testament religion to a certain extent with the apostate Judaism they witnessed around them in these professed advocates of the Old Testament, and to misconceive the divinely-established worship of the old dispensation according to the spurious forms to which it was now perverted after its fulfillment in the new dispensation. It was easy for Christians, witnessing the typical worship only in these spurious anachronisms, to overlook the fact that there had been a time when it had been of divine appointment, spiritual and evangelical. Third: The Christians knew of Jews only as the murderers of the Lord, as stubborn and embittered opponents of his gospel (whether as revealed in their own Old Testament or in the New), as systematic slanderers of the Church and as instigators of pagan persecutions. This odious attitude of all the professed

advocates of the Old Testament could not but prejudice the Christians' apprehension of their Scriptures. To these causes must be added, in the fourth place, the perverse, metaphorical and mystical plan of interpreting Scripture, and especially Old-Testament Scripture, which the Fathers so soon imbibed, and which they saw carried to such extremes by the rabbinical scholars. When we consider these causes, we cease to wonder that the early Christian writers misconceived the proper relations of the Old Testament to the New, or that they uttered on this subject many ambiguities and errors.

If, now, a Father is found saying that the apostles "abolished the Sabbath," he is to be understood, *not as meaning that the apostles abrogated the fourth commandment*—a statement which can be found in no respectable Christian writer—but he is thinking only of the rabbinical seventh day, with its senseless and unscriptural superstitions. This is the simple key to all these patristic citations.

Some of the prelatic enemies of our Christian Sabbath lay much stress on the assertion that none of the Fathers expressly trace the Christian observance of the Lord's day to the fourth commandment. What if they do not? This is, after all, only negative testimony, which proves nothing positive. We point, on the opposite hand, to the fact that none of the Fathers deny the continued authority of the fourth commandment in its essential substance. We hear the wisest of them asserting that the

sanctification of one seventh part of our time in the observance of the first day is of divine authority through the apostles. We hear Eusebius, the most learned of them all, say *that Christ, by the new covenant, translated and transferred the feast of the Sabbath to the first day, or Lord's day, and that all the Christians in the world accordingly have transferred the Sabbath duties to that day.* Is not this virtually saying the essential thing—that the sanctification of the Lord's day is the Christian's compliance with the fourth commandment?

A comprehensive view of these testimonies sufficiently shows what was the opinion and what the usage of the early Christians. As the Dark Ages approached, sound knowledge of the Hebrew literature became very rare; few could read the Old Testament in the original language, and the embittered and sinful prejudices of the Christians against the Jews had their influence in making the former indifferent to the Hebrew Scriptures. Hence great ignorance of the old dispensation and of its relations to the new sprang up. It was natural that the grounds of Sabbath observance should then be misunderstood. Superstition was then rapidly increasing, and saints' days and holy days of human invention first rivaled and then surpassed God's own day in the veneration of the people. When the great Reformation came, many of the Reformers remained under the error which confounded the Lord's day with the Church's superstitious holy

days, and when they threw off the trammels of superstition, unfortunately they cast away the divine obligation of the Sabbath with them.

When we see some of the Protestant churches and divines of Europe deliberately defending worldly amusements (after public worship) on the Lord's day, we should not do injustice to the piety and conscientiousness which many of them show in other things, nor should we condemn errors which they justify to themselves by arguments which they sincerely though erroneously believe, as severely as the profane abuse of the Sabbath committed by some in our country against their own clear convictions. Yet the deplorable fact remains that these unscriptural views about the divine authority of the Sabbath have been the bane of Protestantism. They cause and perpetuate much of the irreligion and skepticism which deform Protestant Europe in many of its parts. It is historically true that the vitality and holiness of the Church are usually in proportion to its reverence for the Sabbath. The Sabbath-keeping churches and generations have been the holy and zealous ones.

This recurring fact may remind us of another argument: that the necessity of a Sabbath day is written in man's very nature. The same God who laid the foundation for its observance in his unchangeable law for all nations and dispensations has also laid the foundation for it in the faculties of man's body and mind, and even in the nature of the brutes

which work for man. This truth has received remarkable confirmation in this age, not only from Christian teachers, but from physicians, statesmen, historians and business-men. Experience has taught us that neither man's body nor his soul, nor the beast which is his servant, was made by the Creator to work seven days in the week. The attempt to do so brings upon the body lassitude, nervous excitability, disease, premature old age, and often sudden death, and on the mind morbid excitement, impatience, rashness, blindness of judgment, and not seldom lunacy. The very beast of burden can do more labor without injury in six days than by working all the seven. An army can be carried farther upon a long march in six days than in seven. It is well known that the merchant who spends his Sabbaths in his counting-house or in worldly excitements is liable to become a bankrupt, because the privation of that recurring sacred calm which God enjoins in his word and in Nature leaves his mind and heart unhinged. The professional man who devotes his Sabbaths to his study ends not seldom in lunacy or in suicide.

Again: As a social and moral institution the weekly Sabbath is precious. It is a quiet domestic reunion for the bustling sons of toil. It brings around a period of neatness and decency, when the soil of weekly labor is laid aside and men meet each other amid the proprieties of the sanctuary and the sacred repose of home to renew their social affections. It

enforces a vacation in those earthly and turbulent affections which would otherwise become morbid and excessive.

But, above all, the Sabbath is essential for man's spiritual welfare. God found it necessary in Paradise for his innocent creatures, necessary for holy patriarchs and prophets, and necessary for Christians. A creature subject to the law of habit, finite in his faculties, compelled by the conditions of his existence to divide his cares between earth and heaven, cannot accomplish his destiny without an authoritative distribution of his time between the two worlds. When we remember that men are now carnal and by nature ungodly, ever prone to avert their eyes from heaven to earth; when we see so much of mundane affection, so much of the eager craving and bustle of worldliness, enticing to an infringement of the claims of heaven,—we see the absolute necessity of such a division. But, obviously, if such a sacred season is necessary, then it must be marked off by divine authority, and not by a sort of convention on man's part. Do we not see that even the divine sanction is insufficient among many who profess to admit it? If the Sabbath be grounded only in human agreement, the license which men will allow themselves in infringing its claims will at last effectually abrogate the whole. Such is the lamentable result to which a Sunday of man's appointment has actually come in more than one land, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. The

most striking confirmation of the whole argument may be seen at this time in a part of Protestant Germany, where, after God's Sabbath was repudiated, the Sunday of man's device has slipped away also, leaving the populace alike without a weekly rest and without Christianity. Experience proves that to neglect the Sabbath day is virtually to neglect religion.

We have thus found the Sabbath law written by the same divine Hand on man's nature and on the pages of the Bible.

The chief attention in this discussion has been given to this point: That the duty of keeping holy the Lord's day is of perpetual and moral obligation on all men. It is by no means to be understood that this duty is hard to be seen by the plain Christian because many objections have been solved and many explanations made by us in reaching this conclusion. It is not any lack of clearness in the duty which has made us deem this long discussion useful, but it is the pertinacity with which error has sought to obscure God's truth. We have weighed the objections patiently, candidly, thoroughly—not because they really deserved weighing, but only because a sad experience shows their power of deceiving. We wished to clear away the last shadow of doubt from God's command. Yet the fair and obedient mind may reach the knowledge of it, if the caviler will only leave him unbiased, by a very short and simple process. There stands the command, "Re-

member the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," in the Decalogue. That law was never meant for change. Then the substance of it must bind me in this last dispensation just as it has bound all men from Adam. The matter is just as plain as "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

It was worth the time and toil for us to reach this settled conviction of a continuing divine obligation for the Sabbath. Its proper observance can never be secured in any other way. It is a "Thus saith the Lord," and this alone, which binds the conscience and spurs the heart of every true Christian. Let the intimate conviction of this divine warrant for the holy day be established in the minds of Christian people against all the doubts and quibbles which have infested parts of Christendom since the Dark Ages, and all men that really fear God will begin to sanctify his day. Hence we close this essay with the feeling that if this conviction is established, little more remains to be done except to invoke the aid of divine grace for assistance in executing our convictions of duty.

The proof which is here presented of the nature of the Sabbath is the best answer to the question, How ought it to be kept? Let conscience and heart respond to God's requirement that his day be hallowed by us, and the details will be easily arranged.

But the answer to this question of details given in the Westminster Confession is so precise and so

scriptural that it will not be amiss to repeat it: We must "not only observe an holy rest all the day from our own works, words and thoughts about our own worldly employments and recreations, but also be taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship and in the duties of necessity and mercy."

A day consists of twenty-four hours, and when God commands us to sanctify one day to him, as we devote the other six to "all our own work," the honest conscience will find no difficulty in concluding that holy time should not be abridged by unnecessary sleep or by needless recreations any more than any other day. Let true faith possess the soul with a scriptural sense of the arduous task to be finished in the believer's own life in fitting it for the everlasting Sabbath, and of the multitudinous claims of misery and ignorance surrounding him among his perishing fellow-men, and the holy occupations of the Sabbath day will appear so urgent and so numerous that there will be no room in it for either worldliness or indolence. Let us hear the law and the testimony, which we have shown to be unrepealed:

Deut. 5:12–14: "Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labor and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy

maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."

Ex. 34 : 21 : "Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing-time and in harvest thou shalt rest."

Ps. 42 : 4 : "I had gone with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day."

Neh. 13 : 15 : "In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine-presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day; and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals."

Mark 2 : 27 : "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath."

Matt. 24 : 20 : "But pray ye that your flight be not . . . on the sabbath day."

Luke 13 : 15, 16 (to show that "works of necessity and mercy," however forbidden by rabbinical superstition, were always consistent with the fourth commandment under both dispensations) : "Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?"

Rev. 1 : 10: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."

Isa. 58 : 13, 14: "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

IV. The increasing disregard of the Lord's day in the United States demands a renewed application of the authority of the civil law to support right customs. The American commonwealths usually have Sabbath laws. These do not, indeed, compel the citizens, under any civil pains or penalties, to attend the churches or the sacraments; nor do these laws attempt to prescribe a spiritual use of the day. The latter is the function of the Church alone. But the State closes all her own halls of legislation and justice, and gives an entire rest to her own servants, on the Christian Sabbath. She also enjoins upon all citizens a cessation of all forms of secular employments on that day, except such as are unavoidable, so as to secure for all a weekly rest and the opportunity to keep religion's holy day to God if they desire it. In how many

ways even this slender respect of civil society to God's day is now impaired the reader knows but too well. Especially is the law of rest trodden upon by those great carrying corporations which seem to feel themselves already too great for the law.

To add to this disorder, large numbers of our citizens, composed of a few professed atheists and infidels and a multitude of immigrants from states abroad, where the Sabbath has been long dishonored, now formally attack the right of the State to enact any Sabbath rest or to enforce it by civil pains. Their argument is plausible. It proceeds from the thorough separation and independence of Church and State established by the American constitutions. These documents say that men of all religions and of no religion shall be equal before the law; that all shall enjoy liberty of thought; that no man shall lose any privilege which the other citizens possess by reason of his opinions or usages about religion; that it shall be unlawful for the State to make any religious establishment of any religion. From this position the enemies of the Sabbath proceed thus: "The Christian Sabbath is no more than an ecclesiastical and religious institution. The Jewish Sabbath, in its day, was only a temporary and typical one. The churches may require an observance of a Sabbath from such persons as choose to join them. But the State has no more right to pass any law about its observance than about enforcing attendance on any other Christian

rite or sacrament. Hence, when a citizen who does not believe in religion or its holy days is estopped from his lawful labor or pleasure on such days, it is an infringement of his guaranteed freedom of opinion. The loss of the day's profit is of the nature of a fine levied against him for his opinions, and is therefore unconstitutional."

Several replies to this argument are commonly heard from the pious. One reply has been, that, according to the American laws, the majority are entitled to rule; and, since the major part of Americans are Protestant Christians, they are entitled to enforce Sabbath laws. But this argument is ruined by two rejoinders. One is, that, while the majority has a right to rule, it is only in accordance with, and within the limits of, the Constitution. The other is, that should the majority in America ever become infidel, then, by the same argument, they would have as good a right to pass laws prohibiting a Sabbath.

Again, it is argued that our Sabbath laws lay no other restriction on the infidel than on the Christian, and that therefore they are just and equal. The Christian citizens do not require of the non-Christian any other Sabbath observance than what they exact of themselves, so that there is no unfairness. That this is also invalid may be shown thus: Let us suppose Papists in the majority here, and forbidding Protestants to labor on their numerous saints' days, whose observance we regard as wholly

superstitious. They could say that their requirement was fair, because they observed it themselves. But we should regard it as oppressive, because we should find ourselves prohibited by others' superstitions from acts to which we had a moral right. Just so argue the infidel immigrants against our Sabbath laws.

Again, we hear the argument put thus: Although Church and State are separate here, yet the American is a *Christian people.* The country was settled by Christians. The great mass are professed Christians. Hence, the immigrant who finds himself a dissentient must submit to this Christian feature of the society whose hospitality he enjoys. If he does not like this usage of ours, he is free to go away. But, unfortunately, the State, which enforces these Sunday laws and which invites these dissentients to become citizens among us, has made an express constitutional covenant with them that they shall incur, at the hands of the State, no restriction or limit of privilege whatever on any religious ground. Now, if any man has a natural, secular right to live without a Sabbath, this objection is formidable.

Once more: it is urged that Christians, conscientiously believing it their own duty to observe the Sabbath, have a civic right, on the lowest grounds, to observe the day, and to be protected from molestation by the amusements and employments of those who care nothing for it. The infidel replies that it is as much the Christian's business to take

his psalm-singing out of the way of the worldling's Sunday theatre or brass band. He says that in a non-Christian State, such as the American, the one stands on as lawful a footing as the other.

But a more tenable plea for the Sabbath laws of the State is found in the facts noticed above, that man's natural constitution requires a weekly rest. Hence, even regarding the State as non-Christian, and as possessed of no functions except protecting temporal and earthly interests, we may claim for it a right to legislate a rest for man and beast on grounds of health and temporal welfare. This is a sound argument, but it only rests our Sabbath laws on a hygienic ground. It is as when a State enacts that children and minor servants shall not be kept at work in shops and factories more than a healthy number of hours.

But the real ground of the State Sabbath laws was touched when we raised the question on the previous page: Whether any reasonable creature, a subject of civil society, has a natural right to live without the Sabbath? We answer: He has not. Whether he chooses to profess the Christian religion or not (a point on which the State has no right to dictate), he is bound simply as a rational creature of God by the Sabbath law of the human race. The positions by which this argument is constructed are these:

1. While the plan of redemption is not essential to ground the validity of a State authority, the doc-

trine of natural theism is necessary. On the atheistic theory no reasonable or obligatory basis can be found for civic duties and allegiance; no solid answer can be given to the question, "Why am I bound to obey the civil magistrate?" nor can any basis of morality safely be laid down. If atheism were true, men would be only ingenious animals; convenience might prompt them to feed in herds, but they would no more be suitable subjects for civil society than other brutes. Civil society is, while a temporal, essentially a moral, institution. Morality can be established only on theism.

2. The Sabbath, as first given to the human race, was an ordinance of natural theism. It was given to man before he was a sinner or needed a Saviour. It was equally enjoined on all races, and at first observed by all. Here the reader need only be referred to the argument of our first section. The Sabbath, as an institution given to men for all ages and dispensations, even including that of Paradise, was and is God's means for maintaining in the human family his knowledge and fear as our Maker, Ruler and future Judge. But on that fear all moral institutions repose—the family, the State, as truly as the Church. Therefore, men are naturally bound to keep the Sabbath simply as men, and not only as Christians.

3. After man fell and came to need redemption the Sabbath was also continued by God as a means of grace and a gospel institute. But this did not

repeal or exclude its original use. The professed Christian has two reasons for observing the Sabbath; every human being has one.

4. The civil legislator makes use of the books of Genesis and Exodus in supporting the propriety of his State laws for the Sabbath, not as a code of redemption, but as an authentic history of man's origin and early code of natural theism. As such, it is supported by all authentic tradition and history, by the teachings of experience and the approval of all wise and virtuous legislators who have known their contents. There is the same species of reason why this sacred history should guide the legislation of all States, as for the British Parliament's guiding itself by *Magna Charta.*

This argument, it will be noticed, gives no pretext for any intermingling of the State with the Christian Church or any denomination in it. The Church is the spiritual organism of redemption. The State is the secular, but moral and righteous, organism for safety, justice and welfare in this life. The State is not necessarily Christian. But it is necessarily theistic, because on the atheistic theory its basis, its rights and its healthy existence are lost. Hence, while the Church has its use of the Sabbath as the institute of redemption and means of grace, the State has its use of it as the institute of righteousness and the natural knowledge and fear of God. The Church accordingly enjoins and seeks to enforce (by her spiritual means) on her members

the right spiritual improvement of the day. The State, by its secular power, enjoins and enforces the outward rest of the day, so that the people may (if they will) use it to learn of God and of his righteous law, to cultivate morals and decency, to rest their faculties of body and mind, and to enjoy the ennobling and wholesome moral influences of the family and fireside.

On this theory no man's franchises as a citizen are abridged on account of his failure to adopt a Christian profession of any name whatsoever. But on this theory we candidly avow the State does discountenance atheism as her necessary and radical antagonist. Should either Church or State therefore persecute an avowed atheist? By no means. Both should treat him with pity and with all the forbearance compatible with the duty of self-preservation. But the State has the same right to restrain him from destroying society by his atheism which a householder has to prevent a lunatic son from burning down the children's dwelling-house. To this catastrophe the systematic neglect of the Sabbath naturally tends, because it tends to the forgetfulness of God, the Ruler of mankind; and that such is its tendency experience is the best proof. The only atheistic communities which have ever had a permanent existence in the world have been mere hordes of savages, like the Australians and Hottentots. All the civilized pagan nations of ancient and modern times had at least polythe-

ism as the basis of their morals and government, and when religious faith was overflowed by skepticism in Athens and Rome, those republics fell. Twice France has seen attempts to found a civil government on atheistic principles. The results were the two Reigns of Terror. Russia now has an atheistic sect seeking to establish a new commonwealth, and its favorite measure is *assassination.*

The sum, then, is: Theism is essential to the State; the Sabbath is essential to maintain theism. Therefore it is that the State can do no less than maintain an outward Sabbath rest.

GTU Library
2400 Ridge Road
Berkeley, CA 94709
For renewals call (510) 649-2500

All items are subject to recall.

GTU Library
3 2400 00389 2514

DATE DUE

AUG 3 1 2000
FEB 6 2001
FEB 2 2001

GAYLORD
PRINTED IN U.S.A.